Met Office and World Bank help developing countries address climate change

11 June 2015 - The Met Office and the World Bank Group sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

The Met Office and the World Bank Group signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Washington DC this week to signal their shared purpose to support developing countries to address climate change. The collaborative approach will help to increase resilience, reduce disaster risk, improve national and regional early warning systems and strengthen the capacities of regional and national hydro-meteorological services.

The Met Office offers practical advice and specialist weather and climate consultancy services and is committed to working with other countries to improve their ability to forecast weather and climate. Regions like Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia are particularly vulnerable to weather and climate extremes, and there is growing demand for accessible weather and climate information.

The World Bank Group is scaling up investments in hydrological and meteorological services to help build climate and disaster resilience in vulnerable countries. According to a recent World Bank report, these services can provide between $3 billion and $30 billion per year in economic benefits.

Phil Evans, Met Office Government Services Director, said: ''The future collaboration will enable the organisations to share expertise and best practice in the field of weather and climate services. Our support to the World Bank Group will help them to empower National Meteorological Hydrological Services to deliver reliable and timely weather and climate warnings and services at local, national, and regional levels in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia.''

Effective weather and climate services are essential in dealing with the impacts associated with climate variability and weather extremes, which comprise more than 75 percent of all losses from disasters. These services will help to protect against disasters, underpin socioeconomic growth, inform policy and ensure that societies prepare for, and adapt to, the impacts of climate change.

At the World Meteorological Organisation Congress last week, the World Bank launched a Framework Program 'Strengthening Climate and Disaster Resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa'. Speaking at the event, Jamal Saghir, Senior Regional Advisor, World Bank Group noted: "Reliable and real-time weather and climate information is a prerequisite for multiple sectors of the economy, and also determines the safety and quality of life of citizens. We are committed to work together to improve these services in Sub-Saharan Africa as an essential ingredient for sustainable development and peace-building."

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